AFROLEZ PRODUCTIONS

AFROLEZ Productions is an *Afrolesfemcentric* multimedia arts organization committed to projecting holistic images of wimmin of African descent, specifically lesbians and bisexual wimmin.

Aishah Shahidah Simmons is available to give lectures and presentations on a variety of topics.

SILENCE. . .BROKEN is available for rental for $50 plus shipping and handling.

For more information on lectures, SILENCE...BROKEN and/or upcoming projects, contact:

AFROLEZ PRODUCTIONS
PO BOX 58085
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19102-8085
215/735-7372

Labor Donated

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PO BOX 58085
Philadelphia, PA 19102-8085

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SILENCE... BROKEN

PO Box 58085 Philadelphia, PA 19102-8085

THE VIDEO

"We can learn to work and speak when we are afraid in the same way we have learned to work and speak when we are tired. For we have been socialized to respect fear more than our own needs for language and definition and while we wait in silence for that final luxury of fearlessness, the weight of that silence will choke us."

-- Audre Lorde
Sister Outsider
© 1986 The Crossing Press

SILENCE. . .BROKEN is an eight minute experimental short about an African American lesbian's refusal to be silent about racism, sexism and homophobia.

Featuring the poetry of Jourdan Keith, this internationally acclaimed short is dedicated to the memory of Black*Lesbian*Feminist *Mother*Warrior *Poet Audre Lorde.

This provocative video challenges the belief that Black Lesbians have to choose between their race, gender and sexual orientation.

SCREENINGS/ FESTIVALS

SILENCE. . .BROKEN is a broadcast quality video that has aired on public television and has been screened at several international film festivals and other venues including:

- Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema, May 1993
- Chicago International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, November 1993
- Painted Bride Arts Center, February-March 1994
- Black International Cinema Festival, February-April 1994
- WYBE-TV35 Through the Lens IV Series, June 1994
- San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, June 1994
- Capetown, South Africa, July 1994
- Rochester Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, October 1994
- University of Pennsylvania, October 1994, November 1994 and December 1995
- Lesbian Video Festivals, Budapest, Hungary and Zagreb, Croatia, February-March 1995
- Black Nations/Queer Nations (?), March 1995
- Womanist Vision Series, March 1995
- Emerging Young Wo/men Filmmakers, April 1995
- University of Michigan, June 1995
- Temple University, December 1995
- Law School Admissions Council, June 1996

THE ARTIST

***Aishah Shahidah Simmons** is the writer, director and producer of **SILENCE. . . BROKEN**. She is an independent filmmaker/festival programmer who creates work that affirms herself as an Afrolesfemcentrist, committed to projecting holistic visions of women of African descent.*

*Presently, Simmons is co-writing, directing and producing **NO!**, a sixty minute experimental narrative documentary exposing intra-racial rape within the Black community. She is also in post-production on **In My Father's House**, an experimental short about the creation of her Black Feminist Lesbian. Simmons was the co-curator of the Lesbian Shorts Video Programs for the 1996 Philadelphia International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. In 1994, she was a post-production intern for the critically acclaimed film documentary, **W.E.B. DuBois: A Biography in Four Voices** by Louis Massiah. For three years, she co-produced **Out of the Closet** and **ON! Sistahs**, two monthly public television shows for a PBS affiliate in Philadelphia, PA.*

Simmons has lectured on the impact of racism, sexism and homophobia, on African American women's lives, in Spain, Mexico, South Africa and at several universities and conferences in the United States. She is also a freelance writer whose essays have been published in The Philadelphia Tribune, The Philadelphia Gay News, Sojourner:The Women's Forum, Hembra, and Crossroads. Her ground breaking essay "Creating a Sacred Space of Our Own" will be featured in the forthcoming anthology Rape, Sexual Assault and Campus Activism: The Next Civil Rights Movement (Jodi Gold and Susan Villari, eds.).

Simmons' work and activism has been documented in several local and national publications including Essence Magazine, Between the Lines, The Philadelphia City Paper, The Black Scholar, and The Philadelphia Inquirer.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Make a financial donation.
- Sponsor a presentation of the work-in-progress.
- Share your resources that may be of value to the project; e.g., statistics and/or research on sexual violence against women of African descent, names of possible interviewees and/or artists, etc.
- Spread the word about the documentary!

Women Make Movies (WMM), the only national, non-profit women's media organization dedicated to the production, promotion, exhibition and distribution of films and videotapes by and about women, is our 501 (c)(3) non-profit fiscal sponsor. WMM provides services to women film and videomakers as well as to the organizations and institutions that utilize non-commercial, educational media in their programs.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation of $100 or more, please make your check payable to **Women Make Movies *and* write "donation for NO!"** on the memo line.

For donations less than $100, please make your check payable to **AFROLEZ Productions**.

Mail all donations to:

AFROLEZ PRODUCTIONS
PO BOX 58085
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19102-8085

For more information, please write to the above address or call 215/735-7372.

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AFROLEZ PRODUCTIONS

NO!

THE RAPE DOCUMENTARY PROJECT

PO Box 58085 Philadelphia, PA 19102-8085

THE DOCUMENTARY:

"Throughout US history Black women have been sexually stereotyped as immoral, insatiable, perverse, the initiators in all sexual contacts -- abusive or otherwise. The common assumption. . .has been that Black women cannot be raped or otherwise sexually abused..." -- **African American Women in Defense of Ourselves** © 1991

NO! will be a sixty minute experimental narrative video documentary exposing the collective silence in the Black community when Black women and girls are raped or sexually assaulted by Black men. **NO!** will reveal the complexities of rape in the Black community given Black people's history of oppression in the United States of America. Through narrative, archival footage, interviews, music, dance and poetry, **NO!** will delve into how the act of committing rape or sexual assault, physically and/or verbally, against Black women and girls is a race, gender, class, and sexual orientation issue.

NO! will be a broadcast quality video suitable for Public Television and Cable. It will be distributed to national and international film/video festivals, women's groups/organizations, community cultural centers, rape crisis centers, colleges and universities, among other venues.

WHY THIS DOCUMENTARY?

Rape...Incest...Sexual Abuse...Domestic Violence Black women have kept these atrocities a secret for too long. Racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism continue to enforce a code of silence with regard to sexual violence within the Black community.

When we hear the phrase, "*Black on Black Crime*," how often do we think about sexual violence? When "Stop the Violence" marches and rallies are organized in our communities, how many are geared to addressing sexual violence? Aren't these atrocities *also* tearing Black people apart?

When mainstream white feminists call for an end to violence against women, why are there so few discussions on the intersection of race and gender and its impact upon women of Color?

While this documentary has everything to do with rape, it also has everything to do with the wholeness and wellness of Black women's lives, with placing their issues first and foremost, with the acknowledgment of their herstoric and continued survival against the odds.

NO! will be a testament to Black women's strength, resiliency and courage.

WHO WE ARE:

Aishah Shahidah Simmons *is the co-writer, director and producer of* ***NO!*** *She is an independent filmmaker/festival programmer who creates work that affirms herself as an Afrolesfemcentrist, committed to projecting holistic visions of women of African descent. For three years, she co-produced two monthly public television shows for a PBS affiliate in Philadelphia. In 1993, Simmons wrote, directed and produced the internationally acclaimed short* ***Silence...Broken****. In 1994, she was a post-production intern for the award-winning film documentary,* ***W.E.B. DuBois: A Biography in Four Voices*** *by Louis Massiah. Since 1995, she has served on the programming committee of the Philadelphia International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. Simmons has lectured on the impact of racism, sexism and homophobia, on African American women's lives, in Spain, Mexico, South Africa and at several universities and conferences in the United States.*

Tamara L. Xavier *is the co-producer of* ***NO!*** *She is a Haitian American feminist actively engaged in the struggle to end violence against women and currently works as a researcher/policy analyst. In 1994, Xavier worked as the Special Assistant on Haiti for a national peace organization, where she focused on bringing national attention to the state-enforced use of rape as a weapon of war. In 1993, she attended the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, Austria and played a key role in the coordination of the first International Tribunal on Women's Rights as Human Rights.*

Wanda R. Moore *is the co-writer of* ***NO!*** *She is a writer and media artist dedicated to telling stories about African American women's experiences, particularly within Black urban popular culture. Moore has worked on two film projects with Diamond-Royals Production Company:* ***Inventing Herself*** *and* ***Conjure Women****, a documentary on African American female performance artists. She also assisted in the post-production of the critically acclaimed film documentary,* ***W.E.B. DuBois: A Biography in Four Voices*** *by Louis Massiah.*